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ABSTRACT

In "The Symbolic Uses of Politics," Edelman presents the thesis that the symbolic output of a political system is a primary force in the development of the system's legitimacy. An examination of this thesis in the context of the political systems of several emerging nations in Sub-Saharan Africa reveals that it must be refined. Because the problem of achieving political legitimacy is more acute in these countries, it seems that symbolic output is more immediately vital to the survival of "promising" political regimes (as opposed to military dictatorships). Symbolic output also takes a somewhat different form in these nations. The countries have few traditional national rituals, and symbolic (charismatic) leadership plays a much more pronounced role. A brief comparison of the symbolic leadership styles of Kwame Nkrumah (who had charismatic appeal but lost it) and three leaders (Jules Nyerere of Tanzania, Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya) who have maintained charisma long after the independence of their countries, suggests that it is fruitful to apply communication principles to the study of the rise and fall of charisma in Africa. (Author/FL)

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PERSPECTIVES ON SYMBOLIC LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL FRAGMENTATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Competitive paper submitted to the Commission on International and Intercultural Communication for the Speech Communication Association meeting in Washington, D.C., December, 1977

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Perspectives on Symbolic Leadership and

Political Fragmentation in Sub-Saharan Africa

SUMMARY

In The Symbolic Uses of Politics, Murray Edelman argues that the symbolic output of a political system is a primary force in the development of the system's legitimacy. Confining his analysis to the American political system, Edelman focuses on "the parade of abstract symbols" and rituals associated with political events.

When Edelman's thesis is examined in the context of political systems of several emerging nations in Sub-Saharan Africa, the thesis must be refined. Because the problem of achieving political legitimacy is more acute in these countries, it seems that symbolic output is more immediately vital to the survival of "promising" political regimes (as opposed to military dictatorships). Symbolic output also takes a somewhat different form in the African nations examined. The countries discussed have few traditional national rituals. Symbolic leadership, which parallels Max Weber's notion of charismatic leadership, plays a much more pronounced role.

A brief comparison of the symbolic leadership styles of Kwamé Nkrumah (who had charismatic appeal but lost it) and three leaders (Jules Nyerere of Tanzania, Houphouët-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya) who have maintained charisma (or at least very strong popular support) long after the independence of their countries, suggests that it is fruitful to apply communication principles to the study of the rise and fall of charisma in Africa.

In 1958, the first major work of literature in English appeared from Africa.[1] It was a powerful novel by Chinua Achebe and it focused on the disintegration of the established African order, a process brought on, in the novel, by Christian missionaries. The title of the novel, Things Fall Apart, was drawn from Yeats' poem, "The Second Coming." That the theme for the 1977 Speech Communication Association Convention springs, in part, from the same source as Achebe's novel of African life is a coincidence, to be sure, but it is also instructive. Whatever the ultimate consensus concerning the center of our association, whatever for us holds things together, whatever keeps things from falling apart, we must ultimately recognize that amid several potential unifying forces one that must not be ignored is a general commitment to place the knowledge gained from our integration atop disintegration elsewhere. We seek to apply our knowledge to political and social life, while at the same time we draw knowledge from political and social life. And so, we come to Africa and find disintegration. It is then our obligation to see if our knowledge can apply, to see if the special training provided by our communication studies backgrounds can lend unique insights which might ultimately contribute to African life as well as social theory. In this paper, I submit that it can.

In The Symbolic Uses of Politics,[2] Murray Edelman argues that the symbolic output of a political system is a primary force in the development of the system's legitimacy. Confining his analysis primarily to the American political system, Edelman focuses on "the parade of abstract

symbols and rituals associated with political events." He argues that while voting, political party conventions, and many other political acts have been analyzed primarily in terms of their products, such acts often have subliminal functions. Many acts appear to have self-contained ritualistic utility which ultimately serves to legitimize the political system itself.

When Edelman's thesis is applied to political systems of several emerging nations of Sub-Saharan Africa the thesis must be refined. Because the problem of achieving political legitimacy and stability is more acute in these countries, symbolic output appears to be more immediately vital to the survival of "promising" political regimes[3] (as opposed to military dictatorships). Symbolic output also takes a somewhat different form in the African nations examined. The countries discussed have few traditional national rituals. Symbolic leadership,[4] which parallels Weber's notion of charismatic leadership,[5] plays a much more pronounced and important role. First, let us examine the problems of legitimacy and stability which these nations face. Then we can examine the role of symbolic output in meeting these problems.

With a few exceptions, such as Tunisia and Somalia, African political systems have fragmented political cultures.[6] Claude Ake defines political culture as "the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols, and values which define the situation in which political actions takes place."[7] A fragmented political culture[8] exists when several distinct systems of beliefs, values and symbols

are embedded in a single political system and define the situation in which political action does or should take place. Bell and Muskos point out that in fragmented political cultures there are multiple subjective realities rather than a relatively shared perception of what is or ought to be with regard to political activity.[9]

Political fragmentation, Bell and Muskos tell us, is a world-wide phenomenon which affects even developed societies as can be seen by examining the political realities of such minority groups as Russian Jews, American blacks, or French Canadians in comparison with more dominant views of political reality in their respective countries. However, in most developing countries the problem of political fragmentation is much more acute. The newly-independent nations of Sub-Saharan Africa are no exception to this rule.

Tribalism is common and pronounced in tropical Africa, a long-lasting effect of geographic and historical forces. Geographic barriers such as deserts, mountains, rivers, lakes, and dense rain forests exist throughout the continent and these barriers have clearly inhibited tribal assimilation. Tanzania, for example, has over one hundred and twenty different tribes. The largest tribe comprises about twelve percent of the population and the next largest tribe accounts for only about five percent of the population.[10] It is estimated that Zaire has over two hundred tribes. While the total number of tribal groups in Africa is uncertain, Joseph Greenberg classified over one thousand languages in his study of Africa, a fact which should be suggestive of tremendous diversity on the

continent.[11] Diversity also exists within various cultures in terms of religious beliefs, differing educational levels, differing colonial experiences (part of Ghana was ruled by the French and part by the British), and differing expectations which people had about what independence should bring. Many of these differences were exacerbated by colonial rulers who attempted to keep the natives divided. (The British, for example, purposefully isolated the Somalis in the Northern Frontier Region of Kenya from the rest of the country. They also separated the Hausa in the Northern Region of Nigeria from the other cultural groups in Nigeria. Both of these divisions led to serious internal problems after the nations achieved independence.)[12]

While tribalism is the major contributor to political fragmentation, racial fragmentation is also an important problem in many African countries. Countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda (before Amin), have had large groups of Arabs, Europeans, and Asians who tend to be concentrated in relatively small geographic areas. In Kenya, for example, these groups tended to concentrate in Nairobi, the capital city, or an area long the coast called the Coastal Strip.[13] The reason for such concentration was that members of these groups had tended to either work in the bureaucracy of the colonial administration or they were engaged in trade.[14] At independence these groups wanted to separate from Kenya. The groups living in the Coastal Strip threatened to secede--their people wanted either to be autonomous or to become subjects of the Sultan of Zanzibar.[15] Although nothing came of the threatened secession, the groups did present an obstacle

to the integration of Kenya and they are still not well integrated into Kenyan society. Hostility remains between Africans and Asians, partly because Asians were employed in the lower ranks of the civil service. It is suspected,[16] that the British put many of them in such positions so that they would form a buffer zone between Africans and the British bureaucrats. They hoped that African anger at the bureaucracy would be directed at the Asians, rather than the harder to reach and less observable British administrators. As Cox writes, "The worst point of conflict with African interests arises from Asian predominance in the lower ranks of the civil service."[17] Vincent Cable adds, "Asians developed their own strong prejudices against African peoples, which while it is based partly on the strong but subtle class consciousness of the Indian caste system, must at least partly be explained by their role in the 'pecking order': their insecurity about African competition is rather like the poor whites of South Africa."[18]

Another very important difficulty faced by politically fragmented cultures of Africa is the absence of consensus as to where the boundaries of nations should be. The primary cause of this widespread problem is found in the fact that the boundaries were not carefully calculated as to their potential effects on national unity, but rather they were arbitrarily determined by colonial powers. Waters found thirty-two examples of inter-African boundary disputes in the period from 1955 to 1967.[19] An analysis of Kenya's boundary problem reveals the difficulties for political integration that this problem can create. Kenya's

boundary line divides many culturally distinct groups including the following: the Masai and Wadingo tribes who inhabit both Kenya and Tanzania; the Gallon and Boran tribes who inhabit both Kenya and Ethiopia; and the Bajunis and Somalis who inhabit both Kenya and the Somali Republic.[20] Since Kenyan independence, the Kenya-Somali border dispute has been the cause of renewed clashes between the countries.

The problem here is that the Somalis consider themselves a culturally distinct ethnic group. When the British and Italians established colonies in East Africa in the 1800's, it was they who eventually determined the boundary line that now rests between Kenya and Somalia. The result of these agreements was that a large population of Somalis were included in the territoriality domain of Kenya Colony. There already was a historic hostility between the Somalis and several smaller Kenyan tribes whom the Somalis had pushed out of the Northeast Region in the 1840's. There also was a historic rivalry between the Somalis and the Kikuyu (Kenya's largest tribe). The British exacerbated these matters by isolating the Somalis and when Kenya became independent it was not surprising that the Somalis wanted to secede and join the Somali republic. As Cox points out, "A colonial government down there had been bad enough, though they didn't mind too much being ordered around by the British in whom they had an unjustified amount of faith, based on the highly personal qualities of the British administration they knew. But they would not submit to being ruled by 'those Kikuyu'."[21] (Kenya's largest and most powerful

tribe.) Indeed a Commission of Inquiry in 1962, reported that 87 percent of the tribes throughout the region favored secession."[22] The result of this problem was a long and costly war between the Somalian "shifta" and the Kenyan government which dragged on for many years until the Arusha Declaration of 1967 was proclaimed in Arusha, Tanzania.

Violence similarly erupted in Ghana when the Ewes demanded a plebiscite so that they could separate and join Togo, despite the fact that Ghana is a somewhat economically viable unit, while Togo is an absurd country maintained largely by French aid. The reason was that the Ewes comprised only a small proportion of the population in Ghana. In Togo, the Ewes were the dominant group.[23]

Educational disparities also exist among tribes of many countries, again due to policies of colonial governments. Consider again the case of Kenya where Mr. Nthenge reports, "We know that in most of the province education is not very much appreciated, and very little has been done about it. This is due to the former government."[24] The Kikuyu and the Luo, the largest tribes in Kenya, were also the most educated.[25] This creates serious problems for political development because the Kenyan government was faced with Hobson's choice of either appointing less qualified Africans to civil service posts (which would decrease the country's potential for political development), or appointing the more educated Luo and Kikuyu (which would subject the government to charges of tribal favoritism). Kenyatta's government appears to have followed a policy between the two extremes, but it has been the inevitable subject of criticism by some members of smaller

tribes. As Senator Jilo argued, "Tribalism, to a great extent is practiced by the two main tribes of Kenya, the Luo and the Kikuyus. They hold the most important posts in the Government. The other small tribes, like the Kumbas, Masai, and such others have been completely overlooked and only watch what is happening."[26]

Given the problems of tribal barriers, language barriers, religious barriers, geographic barriers, experiential barriers, educational barriers and the artificial divisions created by somewnat arbitrary boundaries, political stability remains possible in Africa. While such stability has often been achieved by military dictatorship, it has also been achieved in some regimes having a forseeable potential for political growth. The Ivory Coast, Tanzania, and Kenya have maintained stable political systems without military takeover, while Nigeria, Ghana, Zaire, Uganda and many other African governments have been unsuccessful in this regard. Comparison of these countries reveals that although many factors are involved in the maintenance of a stable political system, it is reasonable to hypothesize that symbolic output can be decisive in determining whether a state will experience political stability or political violence and overthrow.

Consider the comparison between Ghana and the Ivory Coast. In the mid-1950's a feud broke out between Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah, then a charismatic figure, and Felix Houphouët-Boigny, the national leader of the Ivory Coast. Nkrumah, an avowed socialist, called himself the "Lenin of Africa" and advanced a rigorous political philosophy which emphasized anti-capitalism.[27] In the neighboring Ivory Coast

Houphouët-Boigny, at independence, welcomed the maintenance of close ties with France. He invited French industry to enter and help develop his country. Nkrumah could not stomach this and a feud ensued which nearly ended in war. Houphouët-Boigny told Nkrumah to wait ten years and see which country would be most successful. At the end of that time, Nkrumah was ousted by an almost bloodless military coup. Houphouët-Boigny remains the leader of the Ivory Coast.

Three factors contributed to the political stability of the Ivory Coast. First, capitalism worked well--the Ivory Coast maintained the highest per capita income in Africa at $220 (four times that of either Somalia or Tanzania), a good growth rate with an average annual increase of the Gross National Product at about 6% per year, decreasing unemployment, no balance of payments crisis, and limited price inflation at 42% as compared to 115% for Ghana over the same period.[29] (Many of the benefits of the Ivorien economy went to the French Ivoriens, however.)[30]

The second reason for political stability in the Ivory Coast is the ever-present threat of using French troops to quell any rebellion that might occur. Christian Potholm observes "The small French military presence in the Ivory Coast is augmented by the existence of a ready reaction force in southern France, the Eleventh Division Légère d'Intervention, which is equipped for rapid and massive deployment to sub-Saharan Africa."[31]

Finally, the symbolic leadership of Houphouët-Boigny is a potent force. Zolberg points out that many Ivoriens believe Houphouët-Boigny is destined to rule them.[32] Potholm argues that "At the age

of 64, Felix Houphouët-Boigny remains the Ivory Coast."[33] Potholm contends that in his personality alone, Houphouët-Boigny represents a symbol powerful enough to virtually eliminate the need for other symbolic output. He writes:

> There is little symbolic flow from the political center, however. There is a national anthem, L'Abidjanaise, and a national flag of orange, green, and white. The orange represents the northern portion of the country, the green the south and the future, while the white stands for peace and unity but it seems doubtful that this symbolism is of much consequence or even understood beyond a select elite. There are few party rallies, few political slogans disseminated from the center, few attempts to mobilize the population.[34]

Potholm contends that Houphouët-Boigny is a charismatic leader according to Max Weber's definition. Whether he is "charismatic" or not,[35] it is clear that Houphouët exerts powerful symbolic leadership. Potholm explains, "He is the father of the nation, la vieux or old one. It is he who is given credit for abolition of forced labor in 1946, it is he who went to France, dealt with colonial authorities, and became prominent even on their terms. It was he who took his country out of a federation which was a financial drain on the Ivory Coast and redirected the course of French West Africa in a fashion widely regarded as beneficial to the Ivory Coast. It was he who won independence on the best possible terms and who made the economic upsurge possible."[36] While this view suggests that the power of Houphouët-Boigny's symbolic leadership is largely derived from his accomplishments, Potholm explains that the Ivorien leader also has traditional authority (he is the "chief among chiefs") and he

has established rational-legal authority: "He is a doctor of medicine, a skillful politician who is known to be as at home in Paris as in his home town of Yamoussoukrov. He is heir to French authority and the formulator of both a modern economic system and the 'Ivorien notion.' His accent on national unity and integration and on the updating of societal values (including the abolition of polygamy and contract marriage), all give a modern stamp to the regime."[37] While Potholm admits that Houphouët-Boigny does not have the "flamboyance and public personality of a Fidel Castro or a Sekov-Touré"[38] he suggests that the image of modernization embodied by the leader is the most important symbolic element of his personality.

The Ivory Coast, however, is somewhat of an anomaly. The economic success of the nation and the threat of French troops which Houphouët-Boigny has at his disposal make it very difficult to determine the relative importance of symbolic leadership in establishing political stability. One could argue that political stability in the Ivory Coast is due mostly to force and/or economic success. Other cases provide stronger evidence for the importance of symbolic output on political stability.

In Ghana, Kwamé Nkrumah is widely regarded to have held charismatic authority at least from the period of 1949-1954.[39] Like many charismatic leaders of Africa, Nkrumah's star rose before independence at a time when no other national symbols existed.[40] As Jean Lacoutre writes, "The relationship he established with the Ghanian people had greater warmth and intimacy than simple popularity; the pattern of

symbols he developed was that which gives rise to social and national institutions and the structure of power he laid, though not perfect marks him nonetheless as the founder of the state."[41] Francis Sutton reports "Nkrumah...Bandu...and Kenyatta are typical of Black Africa's political messiahs. To many, they are heroic, instilling in their followers a sense of mission, and sacred, appearing to be God-sent leaders...They seem omniscient and omnipotent."[42] David Apter observed, "His charisma became a vessel upon which authority floated."[43]

How did Nkrumah gain charisma? The struggle for independence had something to do with it, as Kamuzu Bandu admits: "What was needed was a kind of savior...Human nature...needs a hero to be...worshipped if a political struggle is to succeed."[44] But communicative effectiveness also had something to do with it. Bretton states, "It all began innocently enough. Crowds made up of admirers, mostly youngsters and market women, upon seeing the young Nkrumah in the early stages of his career, would shout with pride, 'Show Boy!' Soon the young leader was carried into arenas where the C.P.P. [Convention Peoples Party] rallied, esconced on a chiefly throne under a resplendent umbrella, symbol of traditional rule."[45] LaCoutre explains, "Kwamé Nkrumah was a born actor. With his handsome build, deep velvety voice and winning smile, his imperious brow, excellent memory and gift for repartee, he had the full wardrobe of a showman, which is what appealed to the Accra crowds."[46]

Important in Nkrumah's communicative style was his accumulation of traditional authority through the use of symbols. Just as

Houphouët-Boigny became "chief among chiefs" in the Ivory Coast, Apter describes Nkrumah's acquisition of traditional authority: "Chiefs will never recover their position, but perhaps chieftancy already has. Clearly Nkrumah is more than ever like a chief. The drums beat when he makes his appearance; libation is poured. These are not empty symbols. The traditionalization of authority has begun."[47]

Lacoutre suggests that Nkrumah's 'gift of grace' arose in part because of his ability to draw together various cultural sectors of Ghanian society.[48] Nkrumah who adroitly managed to turn enthusiasm for a mass party into a personality cult, was elevated to his position in part by zealous followers and a news media eager to raise the image of the new leader who, as Bretton suggests, embodied "the sole symbol of newly won nationhood."[49] It was not surprising that, at independence, Nkrumah's picture was placed on postage stamps of the country he chose to call Ghana.[50] Bretton writes, "But what had begun so innocently and reasonably slowly gathered momentum until it reached a climax of madness: Nkrumah's likeness on coins and banknotes, his name emblazoned in neon lights, his likeness cast in bronze, streets and squares named after him, his alleged birthplace declared sacred. Soon it was suggested that he was divine."[51]

Not long after independence, however, specialists in Ghanian politics believe that his charismatic authority faded[52] and although "his vigorous influence over the crowds persisted...he had to resort to the love potions of power makers. To palliate the decline of his charismatic authority he was obliged to dramatize his person."[53]

Dow reports that one reason for Nkrumah's declining charisma was the difficulty in maintaining charisma "after the fireworks."[54] Dow writes further "Nkrumah sought to maintain his charismatic authority both at home and throughout Africa. Symptomatic of this was deliberate encouragement of a cult of personality and the use of the mass media to advertise Nkrumah's charismatic qualities. The growth of this manufactured enthusiasm was naturally in direct proportion to the decline of Nkrumah's genuine charisma. That this campaign failed to generate the desired reaction is now all too evident."[55] By 1966, Nkrumah was overthrown in a matter of hours by a coup which was perhaps manned by as few as six hundred men.[56]

While Nkrumah's political regime lost support, in part, because of widespread waste and corruption and, in part, because of a natural decline in "charismatic potential" after independence, it was also the case that Nkrumah made some poor rhetorical decisions. For example, Nkrumah took personal responsibility for everything, in order to avoid competition and to emphasize his own personality. Dow writes, "Political personalities--potential threats to Nkrumah's personal leadership--were non-existent save as they were on their way to becoming non-persons. The 'Redeemer' took personal responsiblity for everything and this perhaps explains the five assassination attempts directed against him and his ultimate downfall."[57]

Even more importantly, Nkrumah lost touch with his people. Bretton states, "Everything considered, Nkrumah's decision to fly to Peking and Hanoi on February 21 in order to take a personal hand in

negotiations concerning the war in Vietnam was nothing short of amazing...Nkrumah's decision to leave the country at that time on a mission of such dubious value may constitute the ultimate proof that he had become detached from reality."[58]

Precise evidence on the decline of Nkrumah's symbolic leadership remains lacking. It was the case that Nkrumah stayed in his palace and insulated himself from the people. Much of his attention was directed to endeavors outside of Ghana, and Nkrumah frequently relied on outsiders for advice concerning the internal affairs of his country. Nkrumah invested more and more of the country's money on elegant projects like airports and planes which were not needed. He dressed more and more elaborately. Indeed, the transition of Nkrumah's style of dress reflects, perhaps, Nkrumah's attitude toward his own image. Lecoutre writes:

> In 1957, on the night of independence, he and his companions--Ako Adjei, Krobo Edusei, Kofi Baoko, Botsio, and Gbedmah--all wore convict uniforms which none of them ever had on in English prisons--they were unfurling the flag of liberation. For three or four years afterwards, the leader wore Western clothes: he was embodying modernism. During the next period, around 1960, he dressed only in the magnificent Ghanian toga: to honor Africa. The loose fitting pilgram's robe, vaguely reminiscent of Tolstoy's was his subsequent choice: he was marching for peace and liberation. Finally, there was the age of the military tunic, styled at first after the Indian model, long and pinched at the waist, then after the severe Mao style.[59]

Nkrumah's dress seems to have begun to take on the elaborateness of military dictators. Whether this was a cause or an effect of his declining popular support remains uncertain.

But Nkrumah made other mistakes rhetorically. He called himself the "Lenin of Africa." He tried to sell a blend of Trotskyism and Western ideologies of various sorts[60] to the Ghanians. The ideas were largely irrelevant to Ghanian society, however, and the Ghanians could not understand the political ideology. Bretton states, "Nkrumah lacked the ability to reconcile his ideas with reality, to develop a synthesis meaningful to the Ghana of his time."[61] Lenin's picture on the wall of Nkrumah's palace meant little to the Ghanaians. Nkrumah's attempts to utilize pan-Africanism as a device for rallying Ghanaians around his personal rule was a strategy which met with failure. Apter contends that "Nkrumah came to treat Pan-Africanism and the African revolution as the key issue, with Ghana as residual to that object. Nkrumah had no real blueprint for Ghana after independence; his was rather the art of the grand design--a fatal weakness."[62]

While Kwamé Nkrumah held and lost charismatic authority, Jules Nyerere has maintained charisma in his leadership of Tanzania long after independence. Both men took their nations into independence, both headed mass one-party political systems, both espoused leftist political views, both led poor countries and both nations are characterized by pronounced political fragmentation. Their styles of symbolic leadership provide an interesting contrast.

On the eastern side of the African continent, Tanzania, had a gross domestic product of $700 million and a per capita income in 1965 of $65.[63] A survey in 1964 ranked Tanzania 108th of 122 countries in gross national product per capita.[64] It has few resources and most of the population

survives on subsistence agriculture.[65] Life expectancy is 45 years and the latest information on literacy indicates a rate of only 40%.[66] It has more than one hundred and twenty tribes.[67] By all accounts, however, Tanzania has the most politically stable government in tropical Africa.[68] Potholm observes, "In spite of decidedly weak regulative, extractive, and distribution capabilities and a currently uneven rejuvenitive capacity, Tanzania demonstrates a strong symbolic capacity."[69]

Jules Nyerere's use of symbolic leadership in Tanzania stands in direct contrast to Nkrumah's. Nyerere is "Baba Wa Taifa, father of the nation; he is the leader and the Mwalimu or teacher."[70] As Hopkins observed, "In much the same vein that Nkrumah's charisma legitimized political institutions in Ghana, the popular affection for Nyerere has helped legitimize and institutionalize the political patterns and practices emerging in Tanzania."[71]

Nyerere brought Tanganyika (later to unite with Zanzibar to form Tanzania) into independence and he made TANU (Tanganyika Africa National Union) a potent political force. Unlike Nkrumah's belligerent anti-colonial rise, Nyerere's approach appears to have been one of reasoned discourse. Hopkins writes, "His stability in office rests largely on his intellectual talents, his ability to write and think clearly...Statements of colonial officers testify to what amounted to an uncanny ability on his part to legitimize nationalist demands by placing them within the framework of values accepted by the British, by pursuing a policy of accommodation rather than total belligerence,

and by securing alliances with Asians and Europeans willing to follow his leadership. His public speeches, notably those to the United Nations, have been described by many commentators as more articulate and reasoned than those of spokesman attempting to defend British policy in Tanganyika."[72]

Nyerere, like Nkrumah espoused a socialist political ideology, but it was African Socialism, Ujamaa, that Nyerere tried to get Tanzanians to accept. Fred Burke points out that Ujamaa does not translate directly into English, but refers to something like familihood or brotherhood. Burke adds that Nyerere's version of Ujamaa is an extension of the belief in responsibility for one's fellow tribesmen.[73] Thus, tied to indigenous beliefs, Nyerere's political philosophy was formulated in a way that could be understood and accepted by his people. Nkrumah failed miserably on this count.

Nyerere, furthermore, keeps in contact with his people. He has earned a reputation for fairness in appointing members of various races (including Europeans and Asians) and tribes to government posts. While Nkrumah stayed in his palace, Nyerere often goes on safari to establish direct contact with his people. He dresses plainly and lives the frugal, honest, humble existence of a religious leader. Hopkins adds, "Deference and respect for elders, expectations of docility and obedience from youth, and unabiding concern for the poverty-level conditions of the vast majority of Tanzanians are important characteristics of Nyerere's leadership."[74]

Tanzania has another potent force of symbolic output, however, which must also be considered an important contributor to political stability. The people achieve a meaningful sense of political participation in the political party TANU. Potholm explains that TANU is an important symbol in that "it is the party of independence, the anticolonial, anti-imperialist force that supports the system and gives the government meaning."[75]

Potholm thus concludes that Tanzania demonstrates a strong symbolic capability even though it lacks many national symbols. "Like others, it does have a flag and a national anthem (A Swahili version of "God Bless Africa," Manga i Bariki Africa), but it is doubtful that these have much meaning for most of the population. There is also a Ministry of National Culture and Youth which emphasizes the use of Swahili and other aspects of 'African' culture but its impact to date has been negligible."[76] Tanzanian leaders have used the situation in South Africa as a unifying force, but the relative importance of this rhetorical strategy is probably minimal since Nkrumah and several other deposed leaders also attempted this strategy. In any case, symbolic output must be considered an important feature in maintaining political stability in Tanzania since economic rewards and force are not significant stabilizing forces here. Prewitt and Hyden report that despite the poor standard of living in Tanzania "the average citizen believes in the effect of his participation and exercise of his choice, and most exhibit a greater level of identification with, and faith in, the government than has been measured in such developed countries as the United States."[77]

Tanzania is not an exception. In Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta's ability to keep his country together is based partly on force and partly on symbolic leadership. Kenyatta was imprisoned at the time of Kenya's independence because of suspected ties with the Mau-Mau terrorist movement. Kenyatta was involved in some early freedom movements and this combined with his imprisonment by the British elevated him to leadership stature. Dow states, "He provided the goal-independence--identified the enemy-Colonial power--suggested the slogan-Uhuru--outlined the future-a good life free of disease, poverty, ignorance, and oppression--and, most important, he personally symbolized these aspirations for his followers. Their belief in him, demonstrated at mass political rallies, socially validated his authority and made the national movement possible."[78] Cox adds, "'UHURU NA KENYATTA' was a highly successful rallying cry, the equivalent of 'King and Country.' It had, as a public relations man would say, the right personalized appeal. In Kenyatta, the Africans of Kenya began to see themselves imprisoned and, as the theme was developed, tortured, humiliated, defiled."[79]

In prison, Cox points out, Kenyatta could make no mistakes. He had only to watch his popularity grow. Released from prison on the eve of Kenya's independence, Kenyatta was a "living martyr," a "supratribal figure." He had been, as Cox observed, an ideal unifying factor for Kenyans who were engaged in the struggle for independence. The mass political rallies[80] continued. But danger accompanied the freedom of Kenyatta. Cox explains:

> There is no doubt that once he was free, Kenyatta was the first to realize the dangers inherent in this and the dying adequacy of 'Uhuru na Kenyatta' as a national policy. Furthermore, the momentum gained from his release could not last forever. Rumors soon arose that he was a broken man, that one appearance on the American television, harassed by an inquisitorial interviewer, would destroy his international reputation. It was said, possibly with truth, that the younger politicians could dance rings round him at the conference table. His answer, quickly coined, was a new slogan 'Harambee!'[81]

The shift to Harambee 'let's pull together' as a rhetorical slogan is indicative of Kenyatta's sensitivity to his time and people:[82] "The old man himself began all of his open-air speeches with it drawing out the syllables resoundingly and putting a strong accent on the final 'bay.'"[83] The slogan is echoed to this day in Kenya as Kenyatta remains in power despite very serious internal problems in his country.

In addition to the serious challenge posed by the Somali secessionists, the two largest tribes, the Kikuyu and the Luo have a history of conflict and warfare. Like Ghana, Tanzania and the Ivory Coast, no one tribe is large enough that it can force the assimilation of other tribes into its own culture. The problem of political fragmentation is one which is recognized as the most important problem of Kenya. Kenyatta states, "The most essential need which I have constantly sought to proclaim and fulfill in Kenya has been that of national unity; nationhood and familyhood must and can be contrived out of our many tribes and cultures."[84]

Kenyatta's symbolic leadership can partly be explained by examining his verbal and nonverbal communication. Cox reports that Kenyatta's

appearance, in and of itself, is awe-inspiring. Cox writes, "He is only of average height but broad and the set of his great grizzled bearded head on his shoulders bespeaks power. His voice is normally calm, deep and convincing--except when he is annoyed, and then it is harsh and tough. When talking of 'my people,' as he often does, he is fatherly and benevolent."[85] Cox argues that the most striking characteristic of Kenyatta is his eyes. He states further, "Indeed his intense magnetism, his development of the chanting, swaying mass meeting and his ability to hold, almost to transfix, his listeners has often been compared to hypnosis, while the widespread reverence for him incorporates a definite element of fear."[86]

Cox also mentions Kenyatta's speaking abilities. He writes:

> In public he is at his best speaking extempore, being considered a magnificent orator in both Kikuyu and Swahili...In either language he employs continual imagery and proverbs and likes to finish off with a joke and a long, low chuckle...Only in English does he sound uncomfortable and stilted, feeling for his words, not quite getting the pronunciation right...On Independence Day, replying in the stadium to Prince Philip's formal transference of sovereignty, he abruptly abandoned a set speech in English and launched into a Swahili peroration, which incidentally drew tumultous applause and finally confounded those critics who claimed he was losing his powers.[87]

In contrast to Nkrumah, Kenyatta, after independence, tried to minimize his own charisma. Dow observes, "His [Kenyatta's] efforts have been directed against a cult of personality and toward the cultivation of popular rather than devotional support. Throughout there has been a gradual attempt to establish ministerial rather than

personal responsibility."[88] This strategy appears to have been effective in diverting blame from Kenyatta--Nkrumah's dramatic attempts to maintain his own charisma would not allow him to do this. Moreover, Dow adds "Consistent with this has been Kenyatta's policy of avoiding those courses of action that are flamboyant, self-aggrandizing or charismatic but not in the best interest of Kenya's development. His avoidance of deep involvement in African nationalist adventures is suggestive of this."[89]

One difficulty with the situation where symbolic leadership is the main form of symbolic output is that when the leader dies there may be no system of symbolic output available which can compensate for the leader's death. As a result, the political legitimacy of the government would be in jeopardy. It is thought that when Kenyatta dies there is a strong likelihood that a tribal war will result between the Kikuyus and the Luo (led by Oginga Odinga).[90] (Kenyatta, a Kikuyu, wears a Luo beaded hat, an honor conferred by the Luo upon their leaders and a sign of Kenyatta's support in the country.) It is also feared that the Somali problem may re-emerge at the time of Kenyatta's death, particularly in light of the vast military aid which Somalia has received from the Soviet Union.

In Tanzania, it is possible that by the time of Nyerere's death, TANU will be potent enough as a unifying force to maintain political legitimacy and stability in Tanzania. Nyerere, himself, has often considered the enormous diversity in Tanzania as an asset to political stability and, if he is correct, Tanzania might more easily survive

his death. Nyerere's point has been "The more tribes we have the better. My own tribe is 35,000 people; my brother is the chief. If my brother wanted to be a nuisance, he couldn't be much of a nuisance."[91] Still, when political legitimacy is derived from primarily one or two sources, one can expect problems when one of these sources is removed.

Few rhetorical or communication studies have investigated political leadership in Africa,[92] but it seems that symbolic leadership is very important to the political stability and legitimacy of African governments. Furthermore, it appears that governments relying on symbolic leadership for political legitimacy are making differential attempts to supplement such leadership with other means of symbolic output. The effectiveness of TANU in Tanzania appears to provide a strong unifying force in the country, while in Kenya KANU, the only legal political party, does not enjoy such a status. Differences such as this should be important developments in the eyes of communication scholars. As the next ten years of African history unfold, the relative effectiveness of different types and amounts of symbolic output might be more clearly illuminated.

But communication scholars need not merely observe contemporary African history. This paper has sought to establish the point that Edelman's pronouncements on "the symbolic uses of politics" can be extended to African nations only if some important refinements are made in Edelman's position. Symbolic output appears to be more important in the nations of tropical Africa, but much of that output is not well ritualized in the political system--instead it is provided

in the style and image of the political leader. The arena of African politics, then, has proven to be an important testing ground for theories of political communication.

While the importance of communication to political development in Africa appears to be great, much is not known about communication in Africa. For example, it is not known how much of the symbolic leader's image can be accounted for by his accomplishments and how much by his communicative style. It is not known whether such relationships will vary from leader to leader or under what conditions they will do so. Edelman draws a dichotomy here that needs to be refined. More work is needed and it is work that communication scholars are well equipped to engage in. Over a decade ago, Willner and Willner observed, "The particular strategies of individual charismatic leaders are a subject for empirical investigation. Elements of such strategies might be broken down into such categories as: rhetoric employed in speeches, including rhythm; use of simile and metaphor and allusions to myth and history; use of gesture and movement; employment of ritual and ceremony; manner of dealing with felt doubt and opposition; and mode of handling crisis."[93] If we can apply what we know about rhetoric and communication theory to the study of political leadership in Africa, we might provide a unique and lasting contribution to African life.

[1]Chinua Achebe, Things Fall Apart (London: Astor-Manor Inc., 1958)

[2]Murray Edelman, The Symbolic Uses of Politics (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964).

[3]The distinction between "promising" and non-promising political regimes is based on the assumption that military dictatorships are unable to foster a great deal of political growth even though they may be able to hold a nation together through the use of force. This assumption, I believe, is reasonable and will hold most of the time. I do not seek to go to great length to support the assumption here. For a discussion of political development see Gabriel A. Almond and G. Bingham Powell Jr., Comparative Politics: A Developmental Approach (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966). The importance of the problem of legitimacy to African political systems, however, is underscored when it is realized that more than half of the thirty-eight former African colonies to achieve independence have experienced military coups d'etat. See Marion E. Doro and Newell M. Stultz, Governing Black Africa: Perspectives on New States (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970).

[4]Klapp defines a symbolic leader as "one who functions primarily through his meaning or image," rather than his position or beliefs (although, I take it, a person's position or beliefs might affect his image). See Orrin E. Klapp, Symbolic Leaders: Public Dramas and Public Men (New York: Minerva Press, 1964) p. 7.

[5]Weber distinguishes three types of legitimacy for a political authority: traditional, charismatic, and rational-legal. See Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization ed. by Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947). A good discussion of charismatic leadership which places the audience as a central determinant of a leader's charisma is provided by Tucker. See Robert C. Tucker, "The Theory of Charismatic Leadership," Daedalous (Summer, 1968) pp. 731-746. See also William Friedland, "For a Sociological Concept of Charisma," Social Forces XLIII No. 1 (1964) 23-24.

[6]For discussions of political fragmentation see Claude Ake, A Theory of Political Integration (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1967); James C. Coleman "The Problem of Political Integration in Emergent Africa," Western Political Quarterly VIII (March, 1955) pp. 44-58; and Myron Weiner, "Political Integration and Political Development," Annals of the American Academy CCCLVIII (March, 1965) pp. 52-64.

[7]Claude Ake, "Political Integration and Political Stability: A Hypothesis," World Politics (April, 1967) p. 486.

[8]The importance of examining the underlying features of a political system which we have called "political culture" is well illustrated by

Almond and Powell. They write: "For example, Italy under Fascism appeared to be a quite formidable and powerful political system. It repressed opposition, held massive and impressive parades and defeated the Ethiopians. But then it had great difficulty coping with the Greeks, and it began to collapse in Africa when whole army divisions retreated and surrendered without much of a fight. A simple observational study of Italian politics during this period would not have helped us predict the capacity of the Italian political system to carry out its policies. Had we known more of the mood and the attitude of the Italian population, more of the morale and commitment of its soldiers, more of the resoluteness of its officers and of the capacity for policy making of its political enemies, we might have been able to predict the viability of this political system when confronted with unusual pressure and opposition." Almond and Powell, p. 23.

[9]Wendell Bell and Charles Muskos Jr., "Cultural Unity and Diversity in New States," Teachers College Record LXVI (May, 1965), pp. 670-94.

[10] J. Clagett Taylor, The Political Development of Tanganyika (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963) p. 23.

[11]Joseph Greenberg, Studies in African Linguistic Classification (Branford, Conn.: Compass Publishing Co., 1955).

[12]Senator Ahmed of Kenya states, for example, "The Colonial Government prohibited the people of the North-Eastern Region to move into the rest of Kenya or to travel in Kenya. That is one of the mistakes which the Colonial Government made in the Province which did not allow the people of the area to have more good hospitals, or good roads, or more education, or businesses, or industries, or farms, or anything else." National Assembly-Senate Debates IV (1965), p. 1122. The classic work on Nigerian politics is James C. Coleman, Nigeria: Background to Nationalism (Berkely: University of California Press, 1958). See also, Richard S. Sklar and C. S. Whitaker, Jr., "Nigeria," in Political Parties and National Integration in Tropical Africa ed. by James S. Coleman and Carl G. Rosenberg (Berkely: University of California Press, 1964).

[13]Although racial minorities comprise only about 2.7% of the total Kenyan population and Asians, the largest minority group only 1.8%, minorities composed 12% of the population in the Coastal Strip region. See Kenya Population Census 1 (Nairobi: Government Printer, 1962). Percentages were computed by the author.

[14]In 1962, 40.2% of the economically active adult Asian males and 47.2% of the Arabs engaged in commerce. Only 3% of the Asian males and 26.8% of the Arab males were semiskilled or unskilled workers, while 23% and 32.3% of each group respectively were professional or managerial workers. See Kenya Population Census 4 (Nairobi: Government Printer, 1962) p. 30, 66.

[15]Report of the Commissioner on the Coastal Strip: Sessional Paper No. 9 (Nairobi: Government Printer, 1962).

[16]Richard Cox, Kenyatta's Country (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), esp. 145-164.

[17]Ibid. p. 161.

[18]Vincent Cable, "The Asians of Kenya," African Affairs 68 (July, 1969) p. 222.

[19]Robert Waters, "Inter-African Boundary Disputes," in African Boundary Problems ed. by Carl Widstrand (Stockholm, Sweden: Almquist and Wiksell, 1969) p. 183-184.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Cox, p. 135.

[22]Ibid.

[23]For an in depth discussion of Ghanian politics see David Apter's classic work Ghana in Transition (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1955).

[24]Legislative Council Debates Official Report (12th Council, Nairobi 1963: Government Printer, March 14, 1963) p. 152.

[25]Senator Kebasco, The National Assembly Senate Debates 1963/64 II (Nairobi: Government Printer, Dec. 1963, March 25, 1964) p. 274.

[26]Senator Jilo, Ibid. p. 270.

[27]See Henry L. Bretton, The Rise and Fall of Kwame Nkrumah (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1966); Kwame Nkrumah, I Speak of Freedom (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1962).

[28]See Aristide Zolberg, "Mass Parties and National Integration: The Case of the Ivory Coast," Journal of Politics XXV (February, 1963) pp. 36-48.

[29]See Christian P. Potholm, Four African Political Systems (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1970) p. 254; Victor D. DuBois, "Houphouët-Boigny: Francophone Africa's Man of the Year," Africa Report (December, 1965) p. 8-10; and W. A. Hance, African Economic Development (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967) pp. 250-253.

[30]"The Sages of Abidjan," Time March 15, 1971.

[31]Potholm, p. 250.

[32]Aristide Zolberg, Creating Political Order (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1966), p. 127.

[33]Potholm, p. 264.

[34]Ibid. p. 267.

[35]It should be noted that not all scholars agree with Zolberg and Potholm that Houphouët-Boigny is charismatic. See, for example, David Apter, "Nkrumah, Charisma, and the Coup," Daedalus 97 (Summer, 1968). In this paper I take the position, with Claude Ake, that whether or not to label a leader "charismatic" is not an important question at the present time. Ake writes, "The important and interesting thing here is not whether this personal authority is specifically charismatic but the possibility of an influential personality mediating between the new state and its citizens." See Ake, A Theory of Political Integration, p. 66.

[36]Potholm, p. 265.

[37]Ibid. p. 266.

[38]Ibid.

[39]See Dennis Austin, Politics in Ghana: 1946-1960. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

[40]Potholm's observations (cited in this paper) of the lack of national symbols in the Ivory Coast and Tanzania during this period support the notion that few national symbols were likely to exist in the countries of tropical Africa at independence.

[41]Jean Lacoutre, The Demigods: Charismatic Leadership in the Third World (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1970) p. 249.

[42]Francis X. Sutton, "Authority and Authoritarianism in the New Africa," in Independent Black Africa ed. by William J. Hanna (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1964) p. 412.

[43]Apter, p. 779.

[44]Kamuzu Bandu quoted in Thomas Hodgkin, African Political Parties (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1961) p. 137.

[45]Bretton, p. 88.

[46]LaCoutre, p. 251.

[47]David E. Apter, "Ghana," in Coleman and Rosberg, p. 311. A further discussion of this process is provided by Miller. See Norman

N. Miller "The Political Survival of Traditional Leadership" Journal of Modern African Studies 6, 2 (August, 1968), pp. 183-201.

[48]LaCoutre, p. 250.

[49]Bretton, p. 88.

[50]Ibid.

[51]Ibid.

[52]See Thomas E. Dow Jr., "The Role of Charisma in Modern African Development," Social Forces 46 (March, 1968) p. 328-338.

[53]LaCoutre, p. 251.

[54]Dow, p. 332.

[55]Ibid. p. 337.

[56]See Bretton.

[57]Dow, p. 337. A further discussion of Nkrumah's "megiomania" is provided in Kweku Folsen, "An African Tragedy: Kwame Nkrumah and Mr. Bing (Q.C.)" Encounter 1969, p. 41-42.

[58]Bretton, p. 171.

[59]LaCoutre, p. 262-263.

[60]See Kwamé Nkrumah, Africa Must Unite (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963); Consciencism (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1965); Ghana: The Autobiography of Kwamé Nkrumah (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1957); I Speak of Freedom: A Statement of African Ideology (New York: Frederick A Praeger, 1961); Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism (London: Thomas Nelson, 1965); Towards Colonial Freedom (London: Heinemonn, 1962).

[61]Bretton.

[62]Apter, "Nkrumah, Charisma, and the Coup," p. 782.

[63]Potholm, p. 162.

[64]See Bruce M. Russett et. al., World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), pp. 155-57.

[65]See Robert L. Thomas, Survey of the High Level Manpower Requirements and Reasons for the Five Year Development Plan 1964-65 - 1968-69 (DaresSalaam: Government Printer, 1965).

[66]David Lamb, "If Tanzania's President Steps Down, Africa Will Lose Voice of Reason," Los Angeles Times (February 20, 1977) Part 1-A, p. 1.

[67]African Census Report 1957 (Dar es Salaam: Government Printer, 1963) pp. 40ff.

[68]See Henry Bienen, Tanzania: Party Transformation and Economic Development (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).

[69]Potholm, p. 170.

[70]Ibid.

[71]Raymond F. Hopkins, Political Roles in a New State: Tanzania's First Decade (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971) p. 200.

[72]Ibid. p. 202-203

[73]Fred G. Burke, "Tanganyika: The Search for Ujamaa" in African Socialism ed. by William H. Friedland and Carl G. Rosberg (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1964) pp. 194-219. See also Harvey Glickman, "Dilemmas of Political Theory in the African Context: The Ideology of Julius Nyerere," in Boston University Papers on Africa: Transition in African Politics ed. by Jeffrey Butler and A. A. Castagno (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967) pp. 195-223.

[74]Hopkins, p. 201.

[75]Potholm, p. 170.

[76]Ibid.

[77]Kenneth Prewitt and Goran Hyden, "Voters Look at the Elections," in One-Party Democracy: The 1965 Tanzania General Elections ed. by Lionel Cliffe (Nairobi: East Africa Publishing House, 1967), p. 277.

[78]Dow, p. 330.

[79]Cox, p. 28.

[80]For a description of mass African political rallies see Tom Myoba, Freedom and After (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1963).

[81]Cox, p. 29.

[82]Kenyatta is an austute observer of Kenyan culture. He studied anthropology under Bronislaw Malinowski and wrote an anthropological study of his own tribe. See Jomo Kenyatta, Facing Mt. Kenya: The Tribal Life of the Kikuyu (New York: Vintage Books, 1962).

[83]Cox, p. 29.

[84]Jomo Kenyatta, Suffering Without Bitterness (Nairobi: East Africa Publishing House, 1968).

[85]Cox, p. 25.

[86]Ibid.

[87]Ibid.

[88]Dow, p. 338.

[89]Ibid.

[90]Oginga Odinga's opposition to Kenyatta has been a potential problem in Kenya, but it is not expected to be of much import until Kenyatta dies. For his political position, see Oginga Odinga, Not Yet Uhuru (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967).

[91]Jules Nyerere quoted in H. W. Flannery. "Julius Nyerere, Great Leader," Catholic Association for International Peace XXI (February, 1960) p. 9-10.

[92]An exception is James C. Ching, "Public Address in the Formation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo," Quarterly Journal of Speech LI (February, 1965) p. 1-13; See also Barbara A. Monfils, The Development of Guidelines for the Criticism of African Rhetoric: A Case-Study of Kwame Nkrumah, 1957-1960. Ph.D. dissertation. Department of Speech Communication, Indiana University, 1974.

[93]Ann Ruth Willner and Dorothy Willner, "The Rise and Role of Charismatic Leaders," Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 358 (March, 1965) p. 83.